



# NORTH BROOKFIELD

## Worcester County



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## NARRATIVE

### **Narrative**

The Town of North Brookfield, situated in Worcester County, has a very varied history with many distinguished residents. The town had rich agricultural lands which were profitably farmed by early settlers, but developed a vigorous industrial economy as well, primarily in the shoe manufacturing and rubber products industries.

Rufus Putnam, one of George Washington's chief engineers during the Revolution, served his apprenticeship in the town as a millwright at the Matthews Fulling Mills from 1754 to 1757. The Matthews Mills were themselves a tribute to 18th century engineering, since they included several canals and tunnels which made the natural glacial kettle holes in the area part of a mill ponding complex for the fulling mill. The town avoided the deadly smallpox epidemics of the 1770's by inoculating over 200 people with weakened smallpox virus. People came from as far away as Worcester to receive the inoculations of the experimental vaccine from North Attleborough physicians, Dr. Thomas and Dr. Kittridge, and then to convalesce through a mild form of the disease in small hospitals the town built on the outskirts of the community.

Along with its neighboring town, North Brookfield sent 150 Minutemen to the Battle of Lexington and Concord. But they also demonstrated against the government they had helped create when residents of North Brookfield were involved in Shays Rebellion in 1780, holding meetings in town and hiding their weapons at Ayre's Tavern, one of the oldest buildings in town.

Nineteenth century American poet William Cullen Bryant, lived in North Brookfield when he prepared for college with his uncle, the minister in town for 64 years. Bates Observatory was given to the town in the 1890's and on a clear day, townspeople say, you can see all the way to Boston. George M. Cohan, actor, producer and playwright, was a frequent visitor to town when he came to stay with his grandparents. In the summer of 1934 both Cohan and Connie Mack, another former resident, were honored by the town. The stage of the present Town House was the site of a performance of "Ah, Wilderness," with the original New York cast directed by Cohan, and the Philadelphia Athletics played an exhibition baseball game in town with the Quabang Rubber company team, who defeated them, townspeople are quick to note.

(Seal supplied by community. Narrative based on information provided by the Massachusetts Historical Commission)



# GEOGRAPHY

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## Location

Central Massachusetts, bordered by New Braintree on the north and northwest, Spencer on the east, East Brookfield and Brookfield on the south, and West Brookfield on the west. North Brookfield is about 18 miles west of Worcester, 38 miles northeast of Springfield, 57 miles west of Boston, and 175 miles from New York City.

**Total Area:** 21.72 sq. miles

**Land Area:** 21.06 sq. miles

**Population:** 4,708

**Density:** 224 per sq. mile

## Climate

(National Climatic Data Center)

(East Brimfield Lake Station)

Normal temperature in January.....21.5°F

Normal temperature in July.....70.3°F

Normal annual precipitation.....45.0"

## U.S.G.S. Topographical Plates

North Brookfield, East Brookfield, Ware

## Regional Planning Agency

Central Massachusetts

## Metropolitan Statistical Area

(1993 Definition)

Worcester



# GOVERNMENT

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## Municipal Offices

Main Number: (508) 867-0200

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

## Form of Government

Board of Selectmen

Administrative Assistant

Open Town Meeting

## Year Incorporated

As a town: 1812

## Registered Voters (Secretary of State 1994)

	Number	%	
Total Registered	2,501		
Democrats	818	32.7	%
Republicans	417	16.7	%
Other parties	0	0.0	%
Unenrolled Voters	1,266	50.6	%

## Legislators

[Senators and Representatives by City and Town](#)



# DEMOGRAPHICS

**Table DP-1. Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000**

Geographic Area: North Brookfield town, Worcester County, Massachusetts

[For information on confidentiality protection, nonsampling error, and definitions, see text]

Subject	Number	Percent	Subject	Number	Percent
Total population.....	4,683	100.0	HISPANIC OR LATINO AND RACE		
SEX AND AGE			Total population.....	4,683	100.0
Male.....	2,299	49.1	Hispanic or Latino (of any race).....	51	1.1
Female.....	2,384	50.9	Mexican.....	7	0.1
Under 5 years.....	260	5.6	Puerto Rican.....	25	0.5
5 to 9 years.....	353	7.5	Cuban.....	-	-
10 to 14 years.....	418	8.9	Other Hispanic or Latino.....	19	0.4
15 to 19 years.....	338	7.2	Not Hispanic or Latino.....	4,632	98.9
20 to 24 years.....	236	5.0	White alone.....	4,547	97.1
25 to 34 years.....	589	12.6	RELATIONSHIP		
35 to 44 years.....	788	16.8	Total population.....	4,683	100.0
45 to 54 years.....	689	14.7	In households.....	4,621	98.7
55 to 59 years.....	218	4.7	Householder.....	1,811	38.7
60 to 64 years.....	189	4.0	Spouse.....	969	20.7
65 to 74 years.....	281	6.0	Child.....	1,464	31.3
75 to 84 years.....	266	5.7	Own child under 18 years.....	1,128	24.1
85 years and over.....	58	1.2	Other relatives.....	149	3.2
Median age (years).....	36.9	(X)	Under 18 years.....	59	1.3
18 years and over.....	3,407	72.8	Nonrelatives.....	228	4.9
Male.....	1,641	35.0	Unmarried partner.....	128	2.7
Female.....	1,766	37.7	In group quarters.....	62	1.3
21 years and over.....	3,268	69.8	Institutionalized population.....	61	1.3
62 years and over.....	726	15.5	Noninstitutionalized population.....	1	-
65 years and over.....	605	12.9	HOUSEHOLD BY TYPE		
Male.....	248	5.3	Total households.....	1,811	100.0
Female.....	357	7.6	Family households (families).....	1,236	68.2
RACE			With own children under 18 years.....	603	33.3
One race.....	4,628	98.8	Married-couple family.....	969	53.5
White.....	4,573	97.7	With own children under 18 years.....	435	24.0
Black or African American.....	16	0.3	Female householder, no husband present.....	196	10.8
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	12	0.3	With own children under 18 years.....	129	7.1
Asian.....	10	0.2	Nonfamily households.....	575	31.8
Asian Indian.....	2	-	Householder living alone.....	467	25.8
Chinese.....	4	0.1	Householder 65 years and over.....	206	11.4
Filipino.....	-	-	Households with individuals under 18 years.....	652	36.0
Japanese.....	-	-	Households with individuals 65 years and over.....	459	25.3
Korean.....	2	-	Average household size.....	2.55	(X)
Vietnamese.....	2	-	Average family size.....	3.09	(X)
Other Asian <sup>1</sup> .....	-	-	HOUSING OCCUPANCY		
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	-	-	Total housing units.....	1,902	100.0
Native Hawaiian.....	-	-	Occupied housing units.....	1,811	95.2
Guamanian or Chamorro.....	-	-	Vacant housing units.....	91	4.8
Samoa.....	-	-	For seasonal, recreational, or		
Other Pacific Islander <sup>2</sup> .....	-	-	occasional use.....	13	0.7
Some other race.....	17	0.4	Homeowner vacancy rate (percent).....	0.8	(X)
Two or more races.....	55	1.2	Rental vacancy rate (percent).....	5.4	(X)
Race alone or in combination with one			HOUSING TENURE		
or more other races: <sup>3</sup>			Occupied housing units.....	1,811	100.0
White.....	4,625	98.8	Owner-occupied housing units.....	1,246	68.8
Black or African American.....	34	0.7	Renter-occupied housing units.....	565	31.2
American Indian and Alaska Native.....	38	0.8	Average household size of owner-occupied units.....	2.77	(X)
Asian.....	12	0.3	Average household size of renter-occupied units.....	2.06	(X)
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander.....	2	-			
Some other race.....	31	0.7			

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> Other Asian alone, or two or more Asian categories.

<sup>2</sup> Other Pacific Islander alone, or two or more Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander categories.

<sup>3</sup> In combination with one or more of the other races listed. The six numbers may add to more than the total population and the six percentages may add to more than 100 percent because individuals may report more than one race.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.



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# HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

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**Home Sales** (Banker & Tradesman) -

[Town Stats - Free market Statistics](#)

**Subsidized Housing Units** (DHCD 1998)

[DHCD Subsidized Housing Inventory](#)

Subsidized Housing Units: The number of housing units which count toward the municipality's 10% goal for low- and moderate-income housing. It includes both subsidized affordable units and market rate units in certain eligible subsidized developments.

**Public Housing Units** (DHCD 1999)

Conventional State:	78
Conventional Federal:	0

**Rental Assistance**(DHCD 1999)

State (MRVP:	2
Federal (Section 8):	0



# TRANSPORTATION

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## TRANSPORTATION AND ACCESS

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Located in the Worcester area, which has three major cross-state highways: the Worcester Turnpike (Route 9), Route 20, and the Massachusetts Turnpike. I-495 borders to the east, I-190 connects to the Fitchburg-Leominster area, I-84 and I-395 connect to Connecticut and points south. The region is well connected by rail and highway to the ports, airports, and intermodal facilities of Boston and Providence.

### Major Highways

Principal highways are State Route 9, which runs E-W across central Massachusetts, and State Route 67 running N-S.

### Rail

There is no passenger or freight rail service in North Brookfield, but the network of intermodal facilities serving central and eastern Massachusetts is easily accessible.

### Bus

North Brookfield is a member of the Worcester Regional Transit Authority (WRTA) but does not receive services.

### Other

The Worcester Municipal Airport, a Primary Commercial (PR) facility with scheduled passenger service, is easily accessible. It has 2 asphalt runways 5,500' and 6,999' long. Instrument approaches available: Precision and non-precision.



# CULTURE AND RECREATION

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## LIBRARIES

[Board of Library Commissioners On-line Library Catalog](#)

## MUSEUMS

(American Association of Museums)

None

## RECREATION

[Telephone Numbers for Public Information](#)

**Recreational Facilities** (Recreational sites and activities)

[Department of Environmental Management Recreation Section](#)



# MISCELLANEOUS

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## HEALTH FACILITIES

(Dept. of Public Health 1992)

### Hospitals

None

### Long Term Care

None

### Hospices

None

### Rest Homes

None

### UTILITIES

[Telephone Numbers for Public Utilities](#)



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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NOTE: The COMMUNITY PROFILE draws information from a diversity of sources. The main source of information is listed under each section. In some instances comments submitted by the municipality were incorporated to correct and/or enhance the information obtained from the main source. However, no changes were made to those data bases which must be consistent throughout the state. DHCD has made efforts to ensure the accuracy of all data in the COMMUNITY PROFILES, but cannot take responsibility for any consequences arising from the use of the information contained in this document.